

TRIBUTE TO REV. F.N. WILLIAMS, SR., ON THE OCCASION OF THE 55TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS PASTORSHIP OF ANTIOCH MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH IN HOUSTON, TEXAS

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 26, 2013

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Rev. F.N. Williams, Sr., the legendary pastor of the Antioch Missionary Baptist Church in Houston, Texas. This Sunday, April 28, 2013, will mark the 55th anniversary of Rev. Williams' pastorship of this great church. For more than a half century, Rev. Williams has ministered to the needs of his congregation, spoken truth to power, and been an advisor to several presidents, including Presidents George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama.

Born into a family of preachers and community leaders, Floyd Nathaniel Williams, was the son of the Rev. M.C. Williams and grandson of Rev. Mike Williams. In 1945, at the age of sixteen began to sense a call to the ministry and responded to the call by earning a Bachelor of Divinity Degree in extended studies from Bishop College.

After serving in the U.S. Army as a Warrant Officer during the Korean War, Rev. Williams began his pastoral career at Greater Union Baptist Church in Matthews, Texas. From 1951 to 1958, he served the Lord at Friendship Baptist Church in Eagle Lake, Texas and at St. John Baptist Church in Beaumont, Texas.

In April 1958, after the passing of his father, Rev. Williams was named to succeed him as Pastor of Antioch Missionary Baptist Church, located at 5902 Beall Street, where he continues to serve today.

Rev. Williams did not just preach to the choir. He recognized that to do God's work and to extend his Word, it was important also to reach those in need outside the church. He was the first pastor to implement an athletic program outside of school to provide instruction and support for the youth of the community. And out of that effort came four future ministers whose lives were turned around.

Although the Bible bears witness that, a professed believer should be, "in the world but not of the world," for 55 years Rev. Williams has understood that African American communities have serious problems and thus undertook initiatives outside of the church to ameliorate the suffering and in his community. Among his many initiatives and activities, Rev. Williams served as Editor of the *Globe Advocate* Newspaper; Director of the Advisory Board Standard Savings Association; Director of the Houston Council on Human Relations; Director of the Northwest Water District City of Houston; and Member of the Human Relations Committee of the Houston Independent School District.

Mr. Speaker, Rev. Williams has served the church in numerous ways: as Moderator for the Independent Baptist General Association of Texas; 1st Vice President of the Missionary Baptist General Convention of Texas; President of the Houston Baptist Pastors and Ministers Fellowship; Member of the Board of Di-

rectors of Rural and Urban Ministers Conference, Prairie View A&M University; Member of Board of Directors of Church College Relations Board at Bishop College in Dallas, Texas; 1st Vice President of the Baptist Ministers Association of Houston; Member of the Houston Metropolitan Ministries; Advocate and Supporter of the Texas Youth Commission; and Founder of the Houston Ministers Against Crime. Rev. Williams believed and strongly supported the vision of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and played an indispensable role in bringing Dr. King to Houston. Rev. Williams often reminisces about how he sat only three seats away from Dr. King on April 3, 1968, the night he delivered I Have Been To The Mountaintop, his famous last speech.

A few years after Dr. King's assassination, Rev. Williams and several other local pastors decided that, they "didn't need the government to tell us when to celebrate our history" so they initiated the first ever Martin Luther King Celebration in 1971. To date, he has held 40 Annual Martin Luther King Day Celebrations.

Rev. Williams has been a valued advisor to Presidents. He is a close and personal friend of former President George H.W. Bush whom he brought to the Acres Home and Garden Oaks communities to meet with local residents to discuss the major issues and challenges confronting those communities.

Since that time, Presidents from George H.W. Bush to Barack Obama have sought the advice and counsel of Rev. Williams. On August 19, 2000, Rev. Williams was inducted into the Religious Hall of Fame Elite in Dallas, Texas.

Mr. Speaker, for 55 years Rev. Williams has provided remarkable service to our nation as pastor of the Antioch Missionary Baptist Church and community, state, and national leader.

I am proud to call this remarkable American hero my friend and I offer him my heartfelt congratulations on the 55th Anniversary of his pastorship of Antioch Missionary Baptist Church and my best wishes for continued success for many years to come.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNION LEAGUE CLUB

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 26, 2013

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker today I rise to honor the Union League Club on their 150th Anniversary. Founded in 1863 the Union League Club of New York has built, over ensuing years, a record of distinguished service to our country. The club dates its founding from February 6, 1863, during the Civil War. Tensions were running high in New York City at the time, as much of the city's governing class, as well as its large Irish immigrant population, bitterly opposed the war and were eager to reach some kind of accommodation with the Confederate States of America. Thus, pro-Union men chose to form their own club, with the twin goals of cultivating "a profound national devotion" and to "strengthen a love and respect for the Union."

The New York League was founded by four prominent professionals and intellectuals:

Henry Adams Bellows, Frederick Law Olmsted, George Templeton Strong, and Oliver Wolcott Gibbs. The men, all members of the United States Sanitary Commission, desired to strengthen the Nation and the national identity. They first aimed to recruit a coalition of moneyed professionals like themselves. Strong believed that the club would only thrive with a respectable catalogue of moneyed men. Olmsted especially wanted to recruit the new generation of young wealthy men, so that the club might teach them the obligations and duties of the elite upper class. Members of the Union League Club were instrumental in establishing The Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1870 as well as the Sanitary Commission, a predecessor organization to the American Red Cross. It helped erect the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor and the Lincoln Monument in Union Square. Its members were instrumental in bringing down the "Boss" Tweed ring and in raising funds to outfit American soldiers in several conflicts. Many prominent civic, state and national leaders have enjoyed the fellowship of the ULC. Theodore Roosevelt managed his early political career from the Club's chambers. J. Pierpont Morgan.

The Union League Club played an instrumental role in civil rights, as the club decided to recruit, train and equip a Colored infantry regiment for Union service. The 20th U.S. Colored Infantry was formed on Riker's Island in February 1864. The next month, it marched from the Union League Club, down Canal Street and over to the Hudson River piers to embark for duty in Louisiana. In spite of numerous threats, the members of the Union League Club marched with the men of the 20th, and saw them off. During World War I, the club sponsored the 369th Infantry, the famed Harlem Hellfighters, which was commanded by William Hayward, a club member. During Reconstruction, Union Leagues were formed all across the South. They mobilized freedmen to register to vote. They discussed political issues, promoted civic projects, and mobilized workers opposed to segregationist white employers. Most branches were segregated but there were a few that were racially integrated. The leaders of the all-black units were mostly urban Blacks from the North, who had never been slaves. Black League members were special targets of the Ku Klux Klan's violence and intimidation, so the Leagues organized informal armed defense units.

Today The Union League is a social club providing its members and guests with a quiet sanctuary and relief from the hustle of the city. The Club bestows two annual awards for two of its most prominent members: The Abraham Lincoln Literary Award to outstanding American authors, and the Theodore Roosevelt American Experience Award to individuals who have "enriched the American experience." The Union League Club has stood for the betterment of American society for 150 years and speaks volumes on the character and dedication one must possess to truly change history. Founded in justice and equality the Union League Club been a champion of civil rights, and has made its goal to not only enhance politics but to improve the quality of life, a trait that is well represented through the Union League's illustrious history.

Mr. Speaker I ask that you and my distinguished colleagues join me in celebrating this momentous occasion and honor the Union